

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /022 W

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R 070830Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2363

INFO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

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EO 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OREP, IV

SUBJ: CODEL DIGGS: FINAL REPORT

1. CONGRESSMAN CHARLES C. DIGGS, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS 11-YEAR OLD SON DOUGLASS, ARRIVED IN ABIDJAN MARCH 4, TO DELIVER THE PRINCIPAL ADDRESS FOR THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SEED CRUSHERS, WHOSE 52ND ANNUAL CONGRESS WAS BEING HELD HERE.

2. THE EMBASSY HAD PREPARED A FULL SCHEDULE FOR CODEL DIGGS, INCLUDING AN EMBASSY BRIEFING, A MEETING WITH THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, A MEETING, WHICH HE HAD REQUESTED, WITH THE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES OF MOTOWN RECORDS, A MEETING (AT THAT TIME NOT CONFIRMED) WITH IVORY OCAST PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, A WORKING LUNCHEON AT THE CHARGE'S RESIDENCE, AND A MEETING WITH THE PRESS, IF DESIRED BY CODEL DIGGS.

3. (FYI. GIVEN THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN BEING CONDUCTED BY CONGRESSMAN DIGGS AGAINST THE APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL NATHANIEL DAVIS AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, THE EMBASSY WAS NOT EAGER TO ARRANGE A PRESS CONFERENCE IF CONGRESSMAN DIGGS INTENDED TO USE IT AS A PLATFORM IN WHICH TO EXPRESS HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT.)

4. THE CONGRESSMAN HAD REQUESTED THAT A SOMEWHAT SEPARATE SCHEDULE BE ARRANGED FOR HIS SON, WHICH WAS DONE.

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5. ON MARCH 4, CODEL DIGGS MET WITH OMEISH OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, GERALD THEUS OF MOTOWN, WAS HOSTED AT A RECEPTION BY THE U.S. SEED CRUSHERS DELEGATION, AND TOOK PART IN A STATE DINNER OFFERED BY GOIC TO THE 800 LASC PARTICIPANTS.

6. ON MARCH 5 CODEL DELIVERED THE PRINCIPAL U.S. ADDRESS, WHICH EMPHASIZED INTERNATIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE, IMPORTANCE OF U.S. AS SUPPLIER OF FOOD, RECENT TRENDS IN U.S. EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE THINKING WHICH GUARANTEED IMPORTERS ACCESS TO U.S. PRODUCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND COLSED WITH EXHORTATION THAT ALL DELEGATIONS TO INCREASE PRODUCTION AND WORK FOR FREEDOM OF TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES. THE ADDRESS WAS WELL RECEIVED AND FREQUENTLY CITED IN LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CONFERENCE.

7. WHILE CODEL WAS STILL SPEAKING, WE WERE INFORMED THAT HE WAS EXPECTED AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER USHER. THANKS TO MISSION'S RADIO VOICE CAPABILITIES, THE APPOINTMENT WAS KEPT WITH ONLY A FEW MINUTES DELAY.

8. DURING THE MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, CODEL DIGGS CLEARLY SOUGHT TO RECRUIT FOREIGN MINISTER AND/OR GOIC IN HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST NOMINATION OF AMBASSADOR DAVIS. HE WAS COMPLETELY REBUFFED BY USHER, AS REPORTED IN ABIDJAN 1889.

9. LUNCH AT THE CHARGE'S GAVE CODEL AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH DIRECTOR OF CABINET OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS EMMANUEL NOUAMA, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ENTENTE KAYA, AND VARIOUS OTHER U.S. EDUCATED, HIGH-RANKING IVORIANS. HIGHLIGHT OF LUNCH WAS CODEL'S REPORT ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN U.S. POLITICS AND FOREIGN RELATIONS.

10 AT 1800 CODEL MET WITH IVORY COAST PRESIDENT FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AT THE LATTER'S VILLA IN COCODY. THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION WAS THE BLACK AFRICANS' CURRENT DETENTE POLICY WITH SOUTH AFRICA. NEIGHER CODEL DIGGS NOT PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET CONVERTED THE OTHER TO HIS POINT OF VIEW BUT BOTH SEEMED TO ENJOY THE OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE THEIR NOW WELL-KNOWN POSITIONS. MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOUPHOUET WAS REPORTED IN DETAIL IN ABIDJAN 1930.

11. CODEL DEPARTED ON PANAM 187 AT ABOUT 2320 MARCH 5, AS HE HAD A SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT IN WASHINGTON ON THE EVENING OF MARCH 6.

12. COMMENT: CODEL DIGGS IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE MISSION, WHO HAVE WORKED WITH HIM

AT VARIOUS OTHER POSTS. HE IS EASY TO WORK WITH AND HAS A HIGH RATING FOR PUNCTUALITY AT SCHEDULED EVENTS. THE ONLY PROBLEM DURING THIS VISIT WAS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD BE TRAPPED INTO BEING THE SPOKESMAN FOR CODEL DIGGS IN HIS CURRENT CAMPAIGN AGAINST AMBASSADOR DAVIS. (EMBASSY OFFICERS SERVED AS HIS INTERPRETERS BOTH AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND AT THE PRESIDENT'S VILLA.) FORTUATELY IVORIANS WERE NOT RECEPTIVE TO EITHER OF CODEL'S PRINCIPAL CAMPAIGNS.

13 THE CONGRESSMAN SEEMED SINCERELY PLEASED WITH THE VISIT WHICH, ALTHOUGH BRIEF, GAVE HIM HIGH EXPOSURE IN LOCAL MEDIA. CODEL WAS FEATURED ON FRONT PAGE OF FRATERNITE MATIN MARCH 6. NEWSCLIPPINGS AND PHOTOS WILL FOLLOW BY OM. DIAMANTI

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, REPORTS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ABIDJA01943
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750080-0375
From: ABIDJAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750374/aaaacoht.tel
Line Count: 130
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <11 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL DIGGS: FINAL REPORT
TAGS: PFOR, OREP, IV, US, (DAVIS, NATHANIEL), (DIGGS, CHARLES C)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006